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ABSTRACT

One result of the increased size and complexity of instructional programs is a decrease in the ability of instructional managers to effectively evaluate them. The analysis and synthesis for planning, implementation, redesign, and evaluation (ASPIRE) model for instructional management provides a conceptual framework for obtaining a comprehensive view of the entire program: priorities, levels, data factors, funding sources, and types of instructional service. As a result of using the model, decisions can be made on the basis of more complete information. Space is provided the user of this document to complete data related to rationale for the program, target population, objectives, activities, resources, limits or constraints, evaluation, and report and feedback. Also included is a rating sheet for instructional plans. (Author/LD)

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ASPIRE:

Analysis And Synthesis For Planning, Implementation, Redesign, and Evaluation

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A Model For Instructional Management

Millcreek School District

Erie, Pa.

[1975]

EA 011 320

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INTRODUCTION

The instructional programs in any school system consist of diverse activities related to many instructional priorities and areas. Such activities occur simultaneously at different instructional levels with different outcomes in mind. Sometimes ideas to develop and support the instructional program come from different sources.

As the size and complexity of the school system increases, so does the instructional program. Unfortunately, one result of this increased size and complexity may be a considerable decrease in the ability of instructional managers to examine either in part or *in toto* what is occurring instructionally.

In order to provide a conceptual framework for maximizing this ability, regardless of the complexity of the school system or its instructional program, the ASPIRE model for instructional management was designed. While it focuses attention on what is happening instructionally, it does so in such a way that matters related to administration and supervision, finance, personnel, research, and evaluation may be given careful consideration in this instructional context.

Basically, the ASPIRE model provides for each instructional priority or area - e.g., reading - a matrix of data by instructional level and by funding source (see Figure 1). As a result, all instructional activities related to a particular instructional priority may be seen in one comprehensive and comprehensible synthesis of information. Hence, decisions affecting the distribution or redistribution of these activities over instructional levels or funding sources within an instructional priority, or over the various instructional priorities and areas themselves, may be made on the basis of more complete information. Furthermore, as the rank order of instructional priorities and areas changes, one may readily see the entire configuration for each instructional activity.

Ultimately, any school system applying the ASPIRE model to its instructional program should be in a position to produce a truly comprehensive document. Such a document would be even more useful in systemwide decision-making than just a printed budget or curriculum guide would be, for such a document would provide detailed information about all instruction occurring under all funding sources in the pursuit of clearly identified outcomes.

It is hoped that as the various aspects of the ASPIRE model are presented, the potential applications of the system will become more obvious.

The ASPIRE Model

For each instructional area, a data matrix is generated (see Figure 1). The vertical axis of the matrix is formed by six categories or data factors for each of six different instructional levels. The horizontal axis of the matrix is produced by examining both direct and support instructional services under the auspices of every source of instructional funds, whether local, state, or federal.

As an example, consider the instructional priority to be reading. You would begin completing the data matrix for that instructional area by providing at the preschool level the data regarding target population, present goals, instructional objectives, instructional strategies, staffing patterns, proposed goals, and budget by instructional strategy for direct instructional services in the mode supported by the first funding source to be considered (probably local funds).

Succeeding instructional levels having instructional activities supported by local funds would be similarly described until all data factors for all instructional levels of reading instruction under local funding had been detailed.

This process would continue until all data factors for all instructional levels of reading instruction supported by all funding sources had been supplied. At that point, the matrix for the instructional area reading would be complete.

When every conceivable instructional priority had been similarly analyzed and all data factors had been completed for all instructional levels under all funding sources for all of these

Figure 1

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AND SERVICES

Instructional Level	Data Factors	Local Funding Source		Federal Funding Source		State or Municipal Funding Source	
		Direct Services	Support Services	Direct Services	Support Services	Direct Services	Support Services
Preschool K	Target Population Present Goals Instructional Objectives Instructional Strategies Staffing Patterns Budget by Instructional Strategy Proposed Goals						
Primary 1-3	Target Population Present Goals Instructional Objectives Instructional Strategies Staffing Patterns Budget by Instructional Strategy Proposed Goals						
Intermediate 4-6	Target Population Present Goals Instructional Objectives Instructional Strategies Staffing Patterns Budget by Instructional Strategy Proposed Goals						
Jr. High 7-8	Target Population Present Goals Instructional Objectives Instructional Strategies Staffing Patterns Budget by Instructional Strategy Proposed Goals						

Figure 1

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AND SERVICES

Instructional Level	Data Factors	Local Funding Source		Federal Funding Source		State or Municipal Funding Source	
		Direct Services	Support Services	Direct Services	Support Services	Direct Services	Support Services
Intermediate 9-10	Target Population Present Goals Instructional Objectives Instructional Strategies Staffing Patterns Budget by Instructional Strategy Proposed Goals						
High School 11-12	Target Population Present Goals Instructional Objectives Instructional Strategies Staffing Patterns Budget by Instructional Strategy Proposed Goals						

instructional priorities, the ASPIRE model would have been applied to the entire instructional program of the district.

On the basis of this mass of data, a number of analyses for instructional management purposes, representing different useful views of the entire instructional program, could easily be made. The most obvious of these analyses will be discussed briefly in a later section.

Data Factors

Target Population

Detailed information should be provided about those who are to receive instruction. Unduplicated numbers by age/grade range, and by location should be compiled in two ways: for those who are eligible for this instruction because of their specific needs and for those who actually receive this instruction. In addition, the specific needs of this population should be clearly spelled out.

Instructional Objectives

Detailed information should be provided about (1) the identity of the target population to be affected by the instruction, (2) the nature and degree of these effects, (3) the various instructional strategies to be used in the course of this instruction, (4) the duration of instruction, (5) the devices or techniques to be used to assess instructional effects, and (6) when these assessment devices or techniques will be employed.

Instructional Strategies

Detailed information should be provided about instructional strategy, including all activities intended to accomplish stated

objectives, who is to be affected by such activities, who is to carry out such activities under what circumstances using what materials and equipment over what period of time.

Staffing Patterns

Details should be provided about the number of both professional, aide, and paraprofessional staff members by location, job category, and administrative structuring of personnel.

Budget By Instructional Strategy

Financial details should be provided about each instructional strategy (I.S.), including salaries and fringe benefits, equipment, supplies, etc. associated with that instructional strategy.

Instructional Planning Outline

I. Rationale - Why does or should this instructional plan be implemented?

II. Target Population - Who is to receive the instruction? Indicate unduplicated numbers by age/grade range, distribution, and by location. If necessary, supply such numbers both for those eligible and for those who are or will be participating.

What are the specific needs of this target population? How do you know? In what priority order are those needs? Who decided? On what basis?

III. Objectives - Based on I and II, state the following:

A. The proportion of the target population to be affected by the instruction

B. The nature and degree of these effects

C. The instructional strategies to be used in the course of this instruction

D. The duration of instruction

E. The devices or techniques to be used to assess instructional effects

F. When these assessment devices or techniques will be employed

If you have more than one objective, rank tham in order of importance.

IV. Activities - In view of the stated objectives, what activities are occurring or will occur to meet these objectives? Be comprehensive.

V. Resources - What resources - human, technological (in the broad sense), and financial - are necessary to carry out these activities? What resources do you have and under what funding source (s)?

VI. Limits or Constraints - What limits or constrains this instructional plan?

VII. Evaluation - When actual outcomes and expected outcomes are compared, what are the results? Were there any unexpected outcomes that should be mentioned as well? What implications for future operations can be identified? Are there suggestions to be made? Are there research studies to be conducted?

VIII. Report and Feedback - Document in both detailed form and in summary form all available information about Items I-VII. Disseminate as appropriate. Include form for comments by consumers of this data. Completed and returned feedback forms should go to the instructional manager.

Rating Sheet for Instructional Plans

(NOTE: Any instructional plan should earn at least a "2" in each category before being considered for funding under any auspices, whether local, state, or federal.)

I. Rationale (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Well developed, sound, supported by research findings or other appropriate data.

2 Adequate but needs additional development and/or support to justify the proposal.

1 Inadequate, weak, poorly developed, fails to justify the proposal.

0 No rationale stated.

II. Target Population (Circle appropriate number rating)

A. Identification

3 Comprehensive identification of proposal target, including qualifying criteria, anticipated numbers, geographical distribution, age/grade distribution, and the like.

2 Adequate identification of proposal target, although additional data would clarify exactly who is to be affected.

1 Inadequate identification of proposal target. Little or no data to indicate exactly who would be affected by the proposal.

0 No target population identified.

B. Needs Assessment (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Comprehensive. Both desired conditions and current conditions well documented. Discrepancies clearly spelled out and related to rationale.

2 Adequate. Further clarification needed of both desired conditions and current conditions before discrepancies can be fully identified. Should relate better to rationale.

1 Inadequate. Neither desired conditions nor current conditions indicated; hence, no identification of discrepancies can be made. Little or no relation to rationale.

0 No needs assessment stated.

III. Objectives (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Clearly stated. Includes specification of target group, treatment, instrumentation (by name of complete description), data analysis techniques, and expected or acceptable levels of performance.

2 Adequately stated. Further clarification needed of one or more elements of the objectives.

1 Inadequately stated. Little or no indication of what is to be measured, how, or to what end.

0 No statement of objectives.

IV. Activities (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Comprehensively detailed. Clearly related to the rationale and the needs. Indicate who is to do what, under what circumstances, to whom, where, when, and why.

2 Adequately detailed. At least establish the relationship to the rationale and the needs. Should more clearly indicate who is to do what, under what circumstances, to whom, where, when, and why.

1 Inadequately detailed. Do not indicate, or only vaguely describe, the relationship to the rationale and needs. Do not give a clear idea of what will happen in the implementation of the proposal.

0 No description of activities.

V. Resources

A. Personnel (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Fully staffed as per rationale, needs, objectives, and activities.

2 Adequately staffed as per rationale, needs, objectives, and activities.

1 Inadequately staffed as per rationale, needs, objectives, and activities.

0 No specification of personnel.

B. Equipment and Supplies (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Fully details equipment and supplies as per rationale, needs, objectives, and activities.

2 Adequately details equipment and supplies as per rationale, needs, objectives, and activities.

1 Inadequately details equipment and supplies as per rationale, needs, objectives, and activities.

0 No details about equipment and supplies.

VI. Limits or Constraints (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Fully details both possible and actual sources of limitations or constraints upon implementation of the instructional plan, including funding source guidelines, if applicable.

2 Adequately identifies both possible and actual limitations or constraints upon implementation of the instructional plan, including funding source guidelines, if applicable.

1 Inadequately detailed. Does not indicate, or only vaguely describes, the relationship to the rationale and needs. Does not give a clear idea of what will happen in the implementation of the proposal.

0 No identification of limits or constraints.

VII. Budget (Circle appropriate number rating)

3 Fully supports all necessary aspects of the proposal, from personnel to equipment and supplies to activities to evaluation. Delineates by instructional strategy exactly what will be spent and for what. Clearly related to all element of the proposal, from the rationale on.

2 Adequately supports by instructional strategy all necessary aspects of the proposal, although some adjustments may have to be made in order to avoid a deficit.

1 Inadequately supports by instructional strategy all necessary aspects of the proposal. Omits or too meagerly provides funds for certain facets of the proposal. Some activities, etc., will have to be cut back significantly because of poor financial planning, or over budgets for the program, or over budgets for the proposal.

0 No budget is provided.

I. Rationale _____

II. Target Population

A. Identification _____

B. Needs Assessment _____

III. Objectives _____

IV. Activities _____

V. Resources

A. Personnel _____

B. Equipment and Supplies _____

VI. Limits or Constraints _____

VII. Budget _____

Recommended Disposition of Instructional Plan Based on Rating:

Consider funding _____

Do not consider funding _____

ASPIRE ANALYSES

By Instructional Area

The most obvious analysis would be by instructional priority. For perhaps the first time, one could select any single instructional area, such as reading, and have before him in a single document all of the pertinent data for all of the reading instruction occurring in his school system. He would know at what instructional levels it is occurring; whether it involves direct services or support services or both, and not only what various funding sources are financing it but to what budgetary level. Furthermore, because the budgetary information for each funding source is provided by instructional strategy, he can compare the costs of various reading instructional strategies by looking across funding sources.

In summary, an analysis by instructional priority makes possible an overall view of how instructional activities, staff, and costs related to that one priority are distributed over the various instructional levels, over direct and/or support services, and over the various funding sources available. Decision-making about redistribution of such activities, staff, and/or costs can then be the result of more complete and responsible consideration of pertinent factors. Furthermore, should the rank order of an instructional area become very low, and consideration be given to eliminating all instruction in that area, the consequences of such an action can be more fully and accurately determined on the basis of this analysis by that priority.

By Instructional Level

Another extremely useful analysis would be by instructional level. In this case, all data factors for all funding sources across all instructional priorities would be assembled for each instructional level.

For example, data factors for preschool instruction across all funding sources would be extracted from each instructional priority and combined. The result would be a comprehensive view of all preschool instruction in all instructional priorities under all funding auspices. Similar compilations of data for primary, intermediate, junior high, senior high, and adult instruction would yield similar comprehensive views of all instruction at each of these instructional levels.

Again, an analysis by instructional level makes possible an overall view of how instructional activities, staff, and costs related to that one instructional level are distributed over instructional priorities, over direct and/or support services, and over the various funding sources available. Instructional level-oriented decisions could then be made on the basis of more complete information.

By Funding Source

Still a third type of analysis would be by funding source. All of the data factors at every instructional level for all instructional priorities under the auspices of a particular funding source would be consolidated. Such an analysis would be particularly useful if comparative financial subanalyses such as per pupil cost or cost/effectiveness studies were to be made.

Other Suggested Analyses

A few additional combinations of data yielded by the ASPIRE model should be mentioned, for they could well prove useful to decision-makers. For example, analyses could be made on any of the bases previously presented - by instructional priority, by instructional level, by funding source, etc. Pupil-staff ratios could easily be compared on these source bases. Finally, once evaluations of all instructional activities were available, comparisons by instructional priority, by instructional level, by funding source, and by type of instructional service could be effectively obtained.

Still other analyses to meet the special needs of those involved in making decisions related to the instructional program would be possible using the extensive data produced by application of the ASPIRE model.

SUMMARY

As indicated at the outset, this document provides a framework for obtaining a comprehensive view of the entire instructional program and its configurations by instructional priority, by instructional level, by data factor, by funding source, and by type of instructional service. The utility of the model is limited only by the extent to which potential users are willing to apply and implement its data requirements.

To be sure, it demands that the data elements be obtained, but in this respect it encourages those concerned with instruction to fill in data gaps as they become apparent. If objectives for instructional activities have not been defined, their definition is likewise encouraged by the use of the ASPIRE model. Furthermore, as the data configurations emerge, instructional managers should also be in a position to compare what these data configurations are with what data configurations are desired. For this reason, instructional management objectives should be established if they do not already exist, or reviewed if they do exist.